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*Reference: Anti-Influenza virus activities of commercial oregano oils and their carriers. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(07) 214-18.

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PROTECT OUR PLANET

This special edition of *Common Ground* is dedicated to all those who have gone before us to protect environment, social justice and human rights, as we are now called upon to do today. We are honoured to feature Grand Chief Stewart Philip and his wife Joan Phillip photo taken at Burnaby Mountain on March 10, 2018 during the 20,000-strong rally protesting Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion. Since the protest, it has come to light the federal approval process was rigged. Indigenous leaders, organizations and community groups are calling for an all-party investigation. Many have contributed their time, photos and writing to expose the dirty secrets behind what is now called Oil's Deep State (see page 12). Pushing the pipeline is a monstrous crime against humanity. Unprecedented levels of atmospheric GHGs are now poised to condemn most life on Earth to death. We must stop this bitumen pipeline expansion in order to protect our coast and the climate for the next seven generations. If you have a location where *Common Ground* can be distributed, or wish to hand out some please contact joseph@commonground.ca or call 604 733 2215. Thank you readers for appreciating these important issues of our time.

A personal note of thanks to those who gave money to print additional copies of this special Stop Kinder Morgan edition of *Common Ground*. Thank you Mary, Elizabeth, Peter, Robin, Bette and Julie.

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cover photo by Sharon Kravitz

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BRITISH COLUMBIA'S "NATIONAL TRUST"



Whistleblowers reveal rigged approval

Pipeline opponents demand all-party investigation



WE ARE COAST PROTECTORS

Indigenous leaders, conservation organizations and community groups are calling for an all-party investigation into the federal approval for Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline and tanker expansion project after revelations in April that insiders rigged the federal approval process.

Whistleblowers in the federal government revealed they were pressured "to give cabinet a legally-sound basis to say 'yes'" to the pipeline and tanker proposal," one month before the pipeline was actually approved.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, stated, "We are absolutely shocked and outraged to learn that the legally required consultation process for the destructive Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion may have been disingenuous. Even though consultation and accommodation is a red herring in the era of consent, it exists as a minimum legal standard that the government is required to carry out. We expect a full and independent investigation immediately."

Seven First Nations are awaiting court decisions which could overturn the approval due to improper consultation. These revelations appear to confirm concerns at the time that the federal government had already made up its mind.

"The serious allegations in this reporting, if true, means the Kinder Morgan review process was a rigged game from the very beginning," said Mike Hudema, Climate Campaigner with Greenpeace Canada. "We need an investigation to look into the claims, to determine whether Indigenous leaders and people across the country were lied to and whether the only answer the federal government would hear for this destructive project was the one Kinder Morgan demanded."

High-ranking public servant Erin O'Gorman ordered the five involved federal departments to create a rationale for the approval on October 27, 2016, while consultation talks with local First Nations were going on. The Ministerial Panel that was to fill gaps in the National Energy Board process under the Harper government didn't issue *continued p.16...*

More rigged than a Russian election

On April 25, MP Nathan Cullen stated in the House of Commons, "The Liberal's Kinder Morgan approval process is looking more rigged than a Russian election. The Prime Minister promised the people of Alberta a credible process. He broke that promise. He promised British Columbia meaningful consultation with First Nations. He broke that promise too."

Now, with leaked papers from the Prime Minister's own administration, we have proof that the decision on Kinder Morgan was made before the process even started. Today in Parliament, I asked Justin Trudeau to release the Kinder Morgan papers and the rebuild the trust of Canadians. He chose not to answer the question."



Cradle-to-grave screening

What are health authorities doing with all that DNA?

“This will only hurt a little,” says the nurse as she cradles a brand new baby girl, all glowing pink and wrinkly. “We’re just going to take a little blood from her heel,” she adds, as she swabs the tiny foot, no bigger than the nurse’s thumb.

With one poke, a few droplets of blood are squeezed onto a filter paper and the baby’s brief, high-decibel howl signals the nurse’s job is done here. The blood spot card dries and is quickly whisked off to the lab for analysis.

The nurse assures the new parents, a bit bemused and exhausted from the birth ordeal, the heel prick test is necessary to find certain congenital disorders they should know about right away. The test can be used to detect hypothyroidism, an inability to produce thyroid hormone or phenylketonuria (PKU), a problem with amino acid metabolism, both of which are worth finding out about sooner rather than later.

But how many tests will that little blood spot go through? According to Perinatal Services BC, the group that runs newborn screening in BC, the blood of all BC babies is tested for 22 different diseases. Other jurisdictions might screen the blood for as many as 100 different conditions.

If there are markers for cystic fibrosis and sickle cell disease or other treatable disorders, signalling the child will need special treatment in order to avoid developmental disorders, liver problems or brain damage, these tests might find them. But are there any downsides to starting so early in our cradle-to-grave medical screening culture?

Right now, parents hand over their infant’s DNA because it appears the benefits exceed the risks. The problem is we are not clear what we are risking.

Well, for one, it’s not cheap. BC’s revamped newborn screening program cost about \$2.3 million to set up and it takes another \$2 million per year to collect blood samples from about 45,000 BC babies annually. The tests might find a problem in roughly 20 babies who will have one of a handful of treatable conditions. Another 20 might be found with a rare disease and they might benefit from the

discovery. But 40 kids a year, out of 45,000 tested, means that for every 1,100 babies screened, you might find one with an abnormality you can do something about. Not bad, but not all diseases screened for at childbirth are easily treatable and it is possible the test might miss something important or find something that turns out to be insignificant. Can we be confident that whomever controls this little baby’s genetic sample won’t make it available to insurers, health authorities or even the police sometime in the future? Hmmm, I think maybe not.

Regardless of the best intentions of our medical authorities, we can’t ignore powerful commercial interests swirling around the decoding of the human genome and the fact companies will pay handsomely for the kind of data generated by our databank that contains the DNA of all of our children. Health authorities, including the ones in BC, are tasked with an incredibly important job: ensuring babies’ blood samples are collected in the most ethical way, which usually means through fully informed consent, and guarded by the strongest protection possible. But how does it work out in the ‘real world?’

According to Jason Gratl, [a Vancouver lawyer]... the BC government “has a secret and *continued p.11* ...

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The story below comes via Constance Kellough (publisher) and Lorna Davis from Namaste Publishing in Vancouver. The **Story of Armando** originated in New York's Central Park when Lorna Davis met a homeless man named Armando. His life story greatly impacted her and she subsequently approached Constance with the idea of bringing his story forward. Rarely is one given the opportunity to witness such a sacred encounter as that of Armando and Eckhart Tolle meeting for the first time on a wet and chilly early April day in Central Park.

Lorna's story

I first met Armando on a summer day in 2013. I walked past a guy on a bench in Central Park who looked like your average homeless guy with a beard and a cart and then I saw the words on the cart.

"Good grief, that doesn't seem like your average homeless guy's cart"! I thought. So I stopped and talked to him.

I heard a little of his background, but there were so many people stopping to talk to him that there wasn't much time to hear his story, a story that emerged over the many weeks and months I sat

Miracle in Central Park

Armando meets Eckhart Tolle

written and compiled by Lorna Davis and Constance Kellough

on that bench with Armando since then.

Armando was born in Brooklyn on April 24, 1960, to Colombian and Puerto Rican parents.

When he was 13, he discovered alcohol and weed on the same day and was hooked. From that day on, Armando was what he describes as an olympic addict. Any event would do. He took crack, marijuana, heroin, alcohol, cigarettes – pretty much anything he could find. His life was a series of cycles through the excitement of scoring drugs and the money for drugs followed by periods in rehab. The way he describes rehab is a story in itself:

"You get really skinny when you are on crack because you walk and walk and walk and you don't eat. Eventually, you get tired and someone tells you to go to rehab, so you go. You get a nice bed, food and it's warm and comfortable. You do nothing except eat and sleep and talk about getting high while sitting in a big circle and they pay you \$200 a month! After three months, you have \$600. You are fat and bored and all everyone talks about is drugs and alcohol so you leave and spend your new money on drugs and off you go again."

One winter night in Boston, in 2001, Armando had done what he often did – caused enough of a commotion for the police to take him in and put him in the cell overnight. It was a good strategy because it was nice and warm and he had worked out which police stations had a holding cell and he would go there, stand outside and give a policeman some lip. He was in the cell and was continuing to give the policeman a hard time, when the two big, Irish cops had had enough. They picked him up and threw him out into the snow. Armando was furious, trudging through the snow, furious with them and the world when he saw a man-hole cover. He lifted it and found himself in a culvert pipe so he sat down to take shelter, to be furious and, as he says, "to suffer some more."

At some point that night, for the first time in his life, he had "a period of no suffering." We might call it "a moment of grace." He thinks it lasted about 20 minutes and it was the most amazing feeling of calm and peace he had ever felt. He waited for the night to end



We watched from some distance as Eckhart walked up to Armando. When Eckhart reached him, Armando stood up and looked with shock and disbelief at first. Then the two men embraced. We stood there watching and there were tears while this tender, soulful hug continued for some time.

and in the morning he emerged from the pipe and dropped everything in the snow – the cigarettes, the crack pipe, the needle – and staggered to a bench. He found a homeless shelter that night and in the morning they noticed he was withdrawing and sent him to rehab. They said he had walked out of rehab twice from there already. He couldn't remember, but there is a "3 strikes" rule so they let him stay and complete the physical detox.

Clean and sober, he set out to discover what had happened *continued p.10 ...*

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Explore veggie meetup groups

Some people from Winnipeg call our fair city “Vegcouver.” One good reason is that when we search the helpful, plant-based eating guide, www.happycow.net, for Vancouver BC, we find no less than 244 listings. These include vegan, vegetarian and veg-friendly restaurants, as well as other food outlets. If we narrow our filter just to vegan restaurants, we still end up with 25 listings. A significant number of these have lineups every night of the week and they are opening second and third locations, suggesting that the demand for vegan food in Vancouver has not yet been met and is growing.

British Columbia appears to be leading a dietary revolution, particularly with those aged 35 and under, nearly 40 percent of whom say they follow a vegan or vegetarian diet, according to one national survey. When we look at all age groups, more than eight percent are vegetarian and almost half of these are vegan, in that they include no dairy, eggs or other animal products.

British Columbia appears to be leading a dietary revolution, particularly with those aged 35 and under.

The transition toward a more plant-based diet is easiest with the support of others following the same diet. A great way to start building connections is to visit www.meetup.com. Enter your city, then the word “vegetarian” or “vegan” or just “veg.” You will discover a variety of meetups, including veg dine-outs at vegetarian and non-vegetarian restaurants, potlucks and other events. Some groups are fairly exclusive, inviting vegetarians and vegans, while others welcome omnivores who just want to explore and are not yet certain where they will end up. Make sure to read each group’s “About” page.

It will be no surprise to Winnipeggers that the largest and most active veggie meetup group in Canada is Metro Vancouver’s Meatless Meetup, which features a remarkable diversity of events. In addition to regular restaurant gatherings, meetings include visits to local temples, nutrition tours, potlucks and film nights. Their approximately monthly “potluck-light” gathering at Vancouver Co-Housing (on East 33rd near Commercial) typically features a guest speaker or a film presentation and is a great way to mingle and make new friends.

On Saturday, May 26, the new film *Unity* will be shown. On Saturday, June 16, the evening will include a potluck dinner and a discussion among attendees of what led to their current dietary choices. As a bonus, each evening you are welcome to take a tour of the Vancouver Cohousing’s beautiful common facilities.

You will meet people who care about climate change and recycling, individuals who love animals and especially people who care about people. When I travel the world and connect with vegetarian groups from Reykjavik to Grananda and Kauai to Dresden, I discover a world that is far more positive than the perspective you might get by watching CNN. People who attend these events are inspired and know that through our life choices, we can make a difference.

With the support of resources like www.happycow.net and the veggie groups on www.meetup.com, there has never been a better time to explore a dietary change. The friends you may make along the way are simply a welcome side benefit! www.vesanto.com

Vesanto Melina is a Vancouver-based dietitian and the author of the award winning books, **Becoming Vegan: Comprehensive Edition**, the **Express Edition** (with Brenda Davis) and **Stargold the Food Fairy: The Plant-based Edition** (with Claudia Lemay). vesanto.melina@gmail.com, nutrispeak.com, becomingvegan.ca

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...Miracle from pg. 7

to him. Many people tried to recruit him to their cause and he spent some time standing on a street corner talking about the *Bible*. But none of it felt right.

About a year later, he was in the 96th Street library and he found a copy of *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle, in Spanish. The way he describes it was that it was like coming home. Every word in that book resonated and he felt safe, comfortable and understood.

He has watched every video, read every word of every book of Eckhart's many times over and whenever anyone suggests other teachers, he says, "I don't need another teacher; Eckhart says what I need to know."

Today, Armando sits on the same bench in Central Park every day. He feeds the birds, squirrels and dogs. Many a time I have come to visit him and found a privileged New Yorker crying about how sad they are and I see Armando quietly and calmly listening and accepting them. This man has more friends and has healed more lives simply by his presence than anyone I have ever met. I had a dream that one day Eckhart Tolle would walk down that path and shake Armando's hand.

Constance's story

Now we step back to hear the full chronology. At the request of Lorna Davis, Todd Schuster, who I believe is an agent in NYC, contacted Namaste Publishing's agent Bill Gladstone saying he had a most wonderful story to tell that involved Eckhart Tolle and could he get it to Eckhart. Bill advised him he would have a better chance of getting something to Eckhart if it came through me, his publisher.

When Todd emailed me, I agreed to talk to him and asked him to send on the story for me to read before I would decide whether it was important enough to pass on to Eckhart. Upon reading it, I was so touched by Armando's story and thought Eckhart would be too. It so happened that I was set to meet with Eckhart here in my home office the following week at which time I gave him Armando's story to read. After he finished, he looked up at me and said, "Yes, I will meet with him."

As it happened, Eckhart was to be in NYC giving a talk on March 31st and then another talk to students of NYU the week of April 1st.

"Oh, my God, it's going to happen!" I



said to myself. I quickly informed Lorna Davis who was elated as well. We all worked at keeping this a secret so as to surprise Armando when Eckhart walked to meet him on his bench. There were also several of us there to witness this sacred encounter.

After a 20-minute walk from our entrance into the park, we approached Armando sitting on his bench. We watched from some distance as Eckhart walked up to Armando. When Eckhart reached him, Armando stood up and looked with shock and disbelief at first. Then the two men embraced. We stood there watching and there were tears while this tender, soulful hug continued for some time.

Armando kept repeating that he couldn't believe it, that he couldn't take it all in immediately. His spiritual teacher was standing right in front of him and it wasn't a vision. He kept repeating how breathless he was with surprise and gratitude.


Soon, Armando put a small towel on his bench and invited Eckhart to sit. We stayed put while Eckhart and Armando conversed or maybe a more appropriate word is "communed." When Eckhart

pointed to us, it signalled Eckhart didn't come alone and we were now invited to join them.

I can only speak for myself, but I am confident that the five of us in attendance would say the same thing: our hearts were overflowing with love and gratitude as we witnessed this miracle in Central Park. Armando was animated, talkative and full of joy. He exuded warmth and love, with a heart so big and so wide open he could embrace all mankind.

Eckhart Tolle, author of *The Power of Now* and *A New Earth* and one of the most renowned spiritual teachers in the world today, who has through his teachings elevated the consciousness of millions, met with Armando, surely worthy of being called his disciple.

There are too few stories today that inspire us, that are heartwarming and that show us the power of loving connection and remind us of the goodness in mankind.

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...Cassels from pg. 6

long-term DNA storage bank that was obtained unlawfully.” He says this DNA information “can say a lot about the children who donated the blood, but it could also say something about their parents.” Are the samples being used in research?

Yes they are, Gratl admits, but he adds, “The precise conditions under which the samples are being used for research have yet to be explored.” He says he doesn’t think there’s anything malignant going on with the screening, but the “lack of consent over the long-term storage of the blood samples” is the real issue at stake.

There are a few general questions that anyone proposing population, “healthy-person” screening should answer, including: Can the disease only be found with the test? Are there other more reliable ways to diagnose or predict this condition? Is the test always accurate in finding the disease in question? Does the disease occur with a high enough frequency in the general population? Does the disease have some urgency? Does it need to be found right away so things can be done to mitigate the disease’s burden?

The tests for PKU and hyperthyroid-

ism are generally accepted because the tests are accurate and early intervention will help treat the kids with these conditions. But what about the range of DNA tests that could be performed on this baby’s blood? Is it wise to be carrying out genetic horoscoping on this baby just because we can?

GeneWatch UK, a non-profit group focused on genetic testing issues, has been a major critic of the modern push to use DNA to test everything. The organization wrote a paper in strong reaction to a government committee’s suggestion that all babies born in the UK should have their genome sequenced.

Helen Wallace, GeneWatch’s director, gets right to the heart of the issue when she says, “Genes are poor predictors of most illnesses so most children would get misleading information about their genetic risk.” She added, “Most diseases in most people depend much more on social and environmental factors. Better school dinners are much more important for most children than genetic testing.”

Should we be concerned about DNA testing of our babies in BC or anywhere else for that matter?

The answer is “It depends.” It depends

how authorities intend to use our baby’s DNA. Will they eventually attach it to her electronic health record, fusing personal genetic and health information so research and monitoring of disease can be done more efficiently? In some eyes, that scenario would be ideal.

According to GeneWatch, “Billions in taxpayers’ money has been wasted in both Britain and the USA and medical privacy has been jeopardized, in an attempt to create the vast databases of electronic medical records linked to DNA that will supposedly allow scientists to ‘predict and prevent’ disease. A massive expansion in the drug market is predicted if everyone is tested.”

What is clear to me – perhaps best symbolized by this ritualistic bloodletting of a day-old infant – is that genetics is going mainstream and playing an increasingly larger role in medical screening and the provision of healthcare. The heel-prick hurts the baby temporarily, yet her first outside-the-

womb screening test will surely not be her last. With modern healthcare systems driven to screen for any and all diseases, this baby will face a lifetime of attempts to find disease in her body.

Right now, parents hand over their infant’s DNA because it appears the benefits exceed the risks. The problem is we are not clear what we are risking. Will that little girl face a black cloud of a disease, which might be benign, hanging over her head or a greater lifetime risk of depression or anxiety? Or will she be discriminated against or stigmatized? Those are things we can’t yet answer.

Genetic screening of our babies may allow us to know many things even as it undermines something many of us hold as sacred: the right, sometimes, not to know. ■

Alan Cassels is the author of numerous books, including **The ABCs of Disease Monitoring**, **The Cochrane Collaboration**, **Selling Sickness** and **Seeking Sickness**.

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Public institutions in Alberta had lost the ability to hold a serious discussion on global warming and the use of oil.

by Kevin Taft

Oil's Deep State

How the petroleum industry undermines democracy and stops action on global warming - in Alberta, and in Ottawa

KEVIN TAFT

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Global warming - in Alberta, and in Ottawa
democracy and stops action on
how the petroleum industry undermines

twenty-five seats, and in eleven of those, their candidates spent less than \$1,000. In one constituency, the NDP candidate spent \$350 to defeat the PC incumbent; the record went to Brandy Payne, who overcame the \$85,000 campaign of an incumbent PC cabinet minister by spending \$240, the price of a cheap suit marked down for clearance. The NDP victor in Medicine Hat, Robert Wanner, had to be coaxed into the race three weeks before election day to replace a candidate who withdrew after facing assault charges; Wanner ended up as Speaker of the Alberta Legislature.

The Notley government had to overcome its inexperience while dealing with a collapse of world oil prices and a sharply slowing Alberta economy. The provincial treasury they inherited had run deficits every year since 2008, despite record exports of oil and gas, a sign of how little the PCs were collecting from the resource. Alberta, with a population smaller than metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona, was selling more oil to the United States than Saudi Arabia or anyone else, yet was still sliding into debt. Despite controversies, the Notley government implemented several progressive policies the previous government would not have considered: raising minimum wages, ending the flat tax, and increasing corporate taxes. Its first bill was an important step to reduce the sway of big donors in Alberta politics by banning union and corporate donations to political parties. It even appointed a prominent environmental activist and former co-director of Greenpeace to co-chair the government's Oil Sands Advisory Group.

Did that mean the oil deep state was defeated in Alberta? Not for a moment. In her speech on election night and

again in her news conference the next morning, Notley emphasized her government's openness to its "partners in the energy industry." She told reporters, "I'm going to be reaching out to industry and they can count on us to work collaboratively with them." In response to a reporter's question, she reiterated her message to the energy industry: "Things are going to be just A-OK over here in Alberta." She promised many phone calls and conversations with corporate leaders, and in her first Question Period as premier said, "Just to be clear, I'm very committed to ensuring that our energy industry is supported." These were understandable messages from a new government in an economy dominated by one industry, but as the NDP's first year in office passed, the partnership began to look like a merger.



Alberta was selling more oil to the United States than Saudi Arabia or anyone else, yet was still sliding into debt.

In late November 2015, Premier Notley presented the work of her Climate Leadership Panel, which formed the basis of her government's plan to help address global warming. "Our goal," explained the premier, "is to become one of the world's most progressive and forwardlooking energy producers."

The nature of deep states is to work across the broad governing system rather than to commit fully to one political party. All political parties are eventually driven from power and that is not a risk members of a deep state want to run. Canada's oil industry is global and it does business with hard conservatives in Texas, social democrats in Norway and a long list of colonels, generals, presidents, and sheiks. Having a grip on both the opposition party and the governing party in Alberta was just prudent, and if an unexpected twist of fate put a third party in office, there were other resources to employ. Deep states are opportunistically partisan in order to endure. It took less than twelve hours after the election for deep state Alberta to begin asserting itself with the New Democratic government of Rachel Notley.

The New Democratic Party was

based on a complicated mixture of public and private sector unions, social justice advocates, intellectuals, progressives and environmentalists. Though a respected opposition party, they had never come close to forming government in Alberta, and when the campaign began in April 2015, no one expected them to win, including their own candidates and organizers.

Behind their well-spoken and appealing leader, Rachel Notley, they ran a smooth and smart campaign, and mistakes by the PCs and Wildrose added to the voter appetite for change, which had grown strong since the political nuptials of Jim Prentice and Danielle Smith. The NDP won a solid majority that made front pages across the country. The scale of the surprise and the bloody-mindedness of the voters can be judged by campaign budgets. The NDP swept every seat in Edmonton and carried several smaller cities. They won fifteen of Calgary's

Two of the plan's biggest components were bold and really could reduce emissions: a carbon tax and an accelerated phase-out of coal-fired power plants. But any gains from these were going to be lost to the staggering increase the plan allowed for oil sands and other oil and gas expansion; emissions would be 55 percent higher in 2030 than they were in 2005. The premier was joined on stage by the heads of some of the biggest oil sands producers, including Steve Williams, CEO of Suncor, who said, "This plan will make one of the world's largest oil-producing regions a leader in addressing the climate change challenge." This statement was a blatant contradiction. It is not possible to address climate change with such a big jump in CO2 emissions.



It is not possible to address climate change with such a big jump in CO2 emissions ... increasing oil sand production was not going to reduce greenhouse emissions.

Ten weeks later, at the end of January 2016, the premier announced the results of the government's royalty review. There were some minor adjustments, but the royalty rates remained essentially as they were. The industry quietly supported the government's position, a complete reversal of its prolonged rage over the 2007 royalty review commissioned by PC Premier Ed Stelmach, which concluded royalties had been far too low for far too long – a stance the NDP of the day had supported. In that case, extraordinary pressure from the industry meant royalties never really rose and Stelmach was driven from office.

A much louder signal that Alberta's NDP government was now aligned with the oil industry came that April when the federal NDP held its convention in Edmonton. A debate arose in the convention about a document called the "Leap Manifesto," which national party delegates agreed should be considered through a long process leading up to its 2018 convention. The Leap Manifesto was supported by a group of outspoken advocates for reducing emissions, including Naomi Klein, Avi Lewis and David Suzuki. Barely two pages long, the document used occasionally flamboyant language to speed through several issues, including the rights of Indigenous peoples, the need to invest in public infrastructure and calls to end trade deals and provide a universal annual income for Canadians. It might have disappeared from view except that it also took a stand on global warming, opposing any new pipelines and calling for the phasing out of fossil fuel use in Canada by 2050, thirty-four years into the future and fifty-eight years after the Rio Earth Summit.

Alberta's oil industry barely had to say a word in

opposition; members of the Notley government did it for them, with vehemence. The premier called the document "ill-informed, naïve, and... tone

deaf" and said its ideas on energy infrastructure would "never form any part of our policy."

Shannon Philips, environment minister in the Notley government, fired a long string of attacks at the document that included calling it "ungenerous, short-sighted and... fundamentally a betrayal." Gil McGowan, the president of the Alberta Federation of Labour and a pillar of the Alberta NDP, said they "had nothing to do with this nonsense" and took a swing at some of the document's backers: "These downtown Toronto political dilettantes come to Alberta and track their garbage across our front lawn," ignoring the support the document had across the country.

As if to drive home her pro-oil message, less than two weeks later, Notley indicated the NDP might be willing to reverse its longstanding opposition to the Northern Gateway pipeline to the west coast of BC. "I'm not completely closed on it," she told reporters, "and I will say my opinion on this has evolved and changed a little bit over time." The leaders of both the Official Opposition Wildrose Party and the third party PCs were pleased with the premier's stance. Fifteen days later, Enbridge, the backer of Northern Gateway, asked the National Energy Board for a three-year extension to the pipeline's approval permit. The once-dead project seemed to be breathing in its grave.

Historically, the NDP had been effective critics of the oil industry, pushing for higher royalties, opposing the Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines and demanding serious action to address global warming. Times changed. The response to the Leap Manifesto was more than just strong words. Strong words register with those who speak them, as well as with those who hear them. In speaking those words, the NDP were not just re-defining themselves to others, they were re-defining themselves to themselves. They were establishing rules of political discourse that framed both language and thought, and under these rules, it was now off limits for NDP members to think or speak about phasing out oil and gas. They were now wholly in the corner of the petroleum industry, fighting for oil sands production and working hard to outdo Jim Prentice, Stephen Harper and their opponents in the Alberta legislature as pipeline and oil sands champions.



Extraordinary pressure from the industry meant royalties never really rose

By the first anniversary of their surprise election victory, it seemed no one was left in the Alberta legislature to speak truth to power, to question the wisdom of adding another pipeline or to point out the glaring

fact that increasing oil sands production was not going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Notley government had entered a world made by and for the production of oil. The oil deep state guided them down the same path as the previous government, toward developing the oil sands, defusing opposition from environmentalists and First Nations and building pipelines. Even the new government's Climate Leadership Panel, the one that recommended a form of carbon tax and the phasing out of coal-burning power plants, accepted emission levels for Alberta more than 60 percent higher than the 1990 levels, never noting that 1990 levels were so high they had been the maximum standard recommended by the Rio Earth Summit. In fact, the panel's levels were so high they made it virtually impossible for Canada to meet its international commitments, but no one fussed; it was a silent and perfect victory for the deep state. There was no voice to ask what the offsetting costs of global warming would be. No voice to say that if the world followed Alberta's self-aggrandizing "leadership," there would be a shocking upward spike in global CO2 levels.



They (the Alberta NDP) were now wholly in the corner of the petroleum industry... as pipeline and oil sands champions.

In the legislature, the Wildrose and PCs thought these levels were punitive for the industry, with several members of the Wildrose caucus drawing bizarre parallels between the proposed carbon tax and the Soviet-era genocide of six million Ukrainians. Elsewhere – in universities, the media, research agencies – there was little criticism. Debates on the minor points of the oil agenda were unavoidable, but debates about its general direction were barely tolerated. The harsh response to the Leap Manifesto was one sign of this; it was shouted down. Public institutions in Alberta had lost the ability to hold a serious discussion on global warming and the use of oil.

This was part of a larger picture. The 1 percent royalty system set up in the 1990s under energy minister Patricia Black reached peak impact in the years before the NDP government was elected, creating the oil sands equivalent of a gold rush. The oil sands were so big that even a meagre portion of the wealth they generated could go a long way among Alberta's relatively small population. Average incomes and retail sales in Alberta had easily topped those in other provinces. Jobs were plentiful, taxes were low and immigrants from other provinces and countries poured in. Most Albertans had never had it so good and saw the oil industry – especially the oil sands – as the key to the province's future.

A threat to the industry was now *continued p.14...*

An open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

I remember following your election victory in the early hours of October 20th, 2015 while on vacation halfway around the world. I was hopeful your leadership would be an improvement compared to another term of Stephen Harper. You said, “We are committed to ensuring that the 2015 election will be the last federal election using first-past-the-post” and I was optimistic. I heard your speech about supporting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, promising necessary reconciliation with our First Nations. You’ve supported the global scientific community’s overwhelming position that climate change is real and impacted by human behaviours, voicing your commitment to The Paris Climate Accord to lower Canada’s carbon emissions and prevent a catastrophic future.

You were saying all the right things. You even looked the part: a young, active West Coast guy with a Haida tattoo who boxes, snowboards and does yoga. You come off as very relatable. When I heard you talking about our beautiful West Coast – “This has been home for me for many, many years, throughout my life, and I get this place; I get how important it is to support it” – I was almost won over to becoming a supporter of yours, almost. There is just one problem: what you’re saying isn’t adding up to what you’re actually doing.

You’re supposed to be our country’s trusted leader. In your promotion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline, you claim your position is supported by science, economics, law and even First Nations. None of these assertions are true, however. The reality about the proposed Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion is that it is connected to the antithesis of what you claim to support. Like you, I’m also a leader. With that title comes the responsibility to hold the trust of those you lead. As a father of two young girls, I’m constantly trying to instil an understanding of good values in them. We should tell the truth and be consistently honest and keep our word. If we don’t do those things, people will not want to associate with us and may become hostile towards us.

On March 21, 1951, the Trans Mountain Pipeline Company was created by a special Act of Parliament. On that same day, the company made a pipeline proposal to the Board of Transport Commissioners. Ownership of the company was split between Canadian Bechtel Ltd. and Standard Oil. This was the same year that saw Parliament “reform” the racist Indian Act. In 1952, the pipeline was constructed and oil was flowing through it by 1953. For perspective, First Nations people weren’t even allowed to legally vote until 1960. The very foundations of this project are premised by a lack of consent and disenfranchisement of the original stakeholders. Without first acknowledging and remedying this initial injustice how can current and future considerations of this project be deemed just or fair?

You campaigned with promises of overhauling the National Energy Board’s flawed approval process and fully consulting with First Nations, only to pull an about-face and use that same faulty mechanism to drive forward Trans Mountain’s approval. The human rights tragedy of this project isn’t only about self-determination and court battles. It is far simpler. On the other end of this pipeline, at its source, is an ongoing attack on the ability of First Nations inhabitants to live a fair and healthy existence. Tar Sands extraction is rapidly destroying the Boreal forests and river ways, that are home to many First Nations that rely on them to eat, drink and practise their traditional ways. No sane economic rationalization can put profits above human lives; your rhetoric about jobs is shameful. As our leader, your job is to safeguard the lives of all Canadians. The oil patch worker’s job is not more important than the lives of all the people being poisoned by Tar Sands extraction and the carbon impacts to our planet. The Alberta Tar Sands account for 38% of Canada’s carbon footprint.

Like you, I have travelled to Fort McMurray. I think we could both agree the experience of being there was very impactful. The bleakness, the lack of animal life and the stench of death were startling to me. I’m confused that you would want to expand this wound. For me, the impact of

my time there was that I needed to do everything in my power to prevent the continued degradation of our planet and the poisoning of the local inhabitants. To this end, I have opposed the Tar Sands and their expansion both with words and deeds. Most recently, I’ve joined with local First Nations to protest at Kinder Morgan’s terminus and holding tanks on Burnaby Mountain.

I was arrested on March 24 for peacefully expressing my opposition to this terrible project. The discretion used in choosing to arrest certain protestors on some days for doing the same thing in the same place while others are left unmolested by authorities is concerning. By my count, there should be several hundred more arrestees at the time of this writing. Your tweet on April 8, 2018, “Canada is a country of the rule of law, and the federal government will act in the national interest. Access to world markets for Canadian resources is a core national interest. The Trans Mountain expansion will be built” did not sit well with me. If you’re so interested in the rule of law, why have most of the arrestees not been given their due process? Most of us have not been served notice for hearings consistent with a timely or appropriate manner. The charges have been changed from civil to criminal contempt and have been processed at a pace that hasn’t allowed many to retain counsel or mount a healthy defence. The rule of law also says that First Nations must be engaged in meaningful consultation, something you continue to avoid by engaging in meetings without their leadership represented.

Please reconsider your position on this pipeline because it will never be built. A recent poll by Insights West shows 44% of British Columbians are opposed to Kinder Morgan’s pipeline. It further explains that 23% of that number are willing to engage in civil disobedience, roughly 10% of adults in our province. This is a fight you won’t win. Choose to be on the right side of history with greater consideration of our future generations. Invest in sustainable alternative energy sources that will benefit all Canadians.

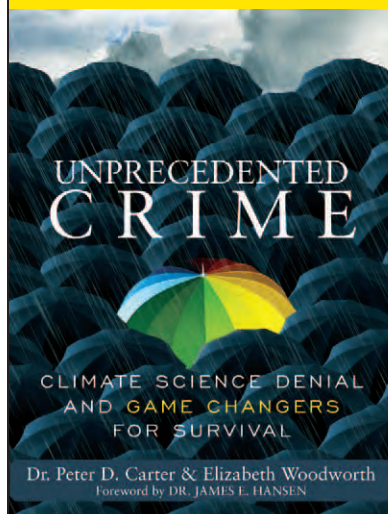
Respectfully,
Ishi Dinim

...*Fossil Fuels* from pg. 13

a threat to Albertans. Not many people wanted to face the fact that Alberta’s situation was economically and environmentally unsustainable. ■

Excerpted from *Oil’s Deep State* © by Kevin Taft, a best-selling author, consultant, speaker and former Leader of the Official Opposition in Alberta (2004-2008). Prior to his election, he worked in various public policy roles (1973-2000) in the Alberta government’s private and non-profit sectors. From 1986 to 1991, he was CEO of the ExTerra Foundation, which mounted one of history’s largest paleontological expeditions in China’s Gobi Desert, Alberta’s badlands, and the Canadian Arctic. He is the author of five books and many research studies and articles on political and economic issues in Alberta.

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Feeling down when waking up

Many of my clients who are working on self healing and creating more positivity in their lives, or who are overcoming anxiety or depression, describe feeling really well for several days and then feeling really down.

I tell them they are experiencing a “dream hangover.” At night, the subconscious works at sorting out our thoughts, feelings, experiences and problems. In our dreams, we often re-experience a struggle we are having in our waking lives.

Even though it is just a dream, the body experiences it as real. If we are in danger in our dream, the body responds the same way as if we were actually in danger. There is an increase in adrenalin and stress hormones and blood pressure can rise as the body goes into “fight or flight” mode.

If the dream is related to a present day loss of someone close through death or the ending of a relationship, the body experiences all the emotions of sadness, hurt and perhaps betrayal and abandonment.

When in danger in a dream, the body responds the same way as when in actual danger. There is an increase in adrenalin...

Sometimes, we remember our dreams and that explains why we are feeling down. More often, the dreams are not remembered so a person wakes up with all of those awful feelings. Because they do not remember the dream, they think they are going back into depression or anxiety that they cannot control. Sometimes, they feel they are not making progress after all.

If, in general, they are doing okay and the dark mood is there from the moment they wake up, we can attribute that to a dream hangover. This is different from the case where one is currently in crisis and waking up brings that reality roaring back.

How do we manage the dream hangover? The first step is to recognize you were feeling okay when you went to bed. And you know you were okay yesterday. So this feeling is not related to your waking life.

Realizing that, we then have to shake it off. Imagine wiper blades clearing your windshield so you can see what is out there. Imagine a dog shaking the water off after a bath or a swim. As you get out of bed, don't take the hangover with you.

Remind yourself you are doing okay and tell yourself it is going to be a good day. Jump into the shower and put on some upbeat music. Give yourself love and compassion.

If we don't do this, the awful feelings become like emotional quicksand. The more we think about them and the more we identify with them and think they are real, the more we are likely to actually enter a downward cycle.

Our thoughts are responsible for how we feel. During waking hours, we can monitor our thoughts and shut down the negative ones. We can make the choice to focus on the positive and to be happy.

When sleeping, we do not have that control. The “parental controls” are shut off. The mind is free to create any and all images. Like a child who sees a scary movie and can't get it out of his/her head, we can carry that sadness or depression from painful dream experiences into our day.

Unlike a real hangover, we can eliminate the dream hangover by knowing the feelings came from a dream and in that sense are not real. It is then easier to simply let them go and move on, identifying with our positive feelings and choosing to be in a good mood. **K**

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. To read more articles or to order books, “Deep Powerful Change” hypnosis MP3s or MP3s for Creating Effective Relationships, visit www.gwen.ca or check out her Facebook inspirational page.

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Bossin and Varley sing truth to power

My finest live-music experience in 2017 was singing – or make that screaming – and sharing *We Don't Believe You Anymore* with Will Varley and tens of thousands of others at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival.

This year, the best so far has been joining in the audience recording of Bob Bossin's equally anthemic, *We Don't Want Your Pipeline*, now readily available as a video on *Common Ground's* website (commonground.ca), Facebook and YouTube

Backstage, after a workshop featuring both songwriters, Varley explained, "Writing is cathartic, done it for as long as I can remember. There's no agenda; when something's on my mind, I write. *Weddings and Wars* was a challenge to capture world history in a song. *To Build a Wall, We Want Our Planet Back* and *Self-Check-out Shuffle* are among titles that are self-explanatory.

"Songs are like wild animals; you can't predict when, or how, they're going to come at you, how they're going to behave. And they no longer belong to me when I'm done. I include a little bit of everything, wouldn't make a record that never made anyone smile, let alone think. And it would be crazy not to comment on current injustices," he added.

The foolhardy and reckless Kinder Morgan pipe dream is an injustice which has been very much on

Bossin's mind. His explosively effective video, *Only One Bear in a Hundred Bites, but They Don't Come in Order*, went viral. Among those who keenly shared the compilation of endless, terrifying global fossil fuel fires were the Green Party, Council of Canadians, the late Rafe Mair, Dogwood Initiative and myriad like minded protectors.

Bossin, co-founder of the legendary Stringband, pioneered crowd-funding and independent, artist-controlled recordings with Canadian themes. His anthemic *Sulphur Passage* helped save Clayoquot Sound, where the mass arrests of 800 protesters was the largest in Canadian history, and brought down the BC NDP government of Mike Harcourt.

We Don't Want Your Pipeline is another arrow in the quiver for the battle against the deadly Kinder Morgan 'Black Snake.' Here are the words:

Chorus:

*We don't want your pipeline We don't want your pipeline
We'll take the sunshine, water and wind.
We're gonna put a stop sign on Kinder Morgan's pipeline.
Go tell your neighbours, go get your friends.*


Verses:

*Alberta's on fire, there's floods Down East,
Polar bears in trouble, dying coral reefs.*

*The whole world is heating up by two or three degrees
And still they want to build another pipeline.*

*Boil-overs, blow-outs, sink-holes too,
A fiery inferno someplace, every year or two.
But Trudeau says it's safe. Man, he hasn't got a clue!
He wants to go and build another pipeline.*

*The suits all say, the deal's gone down.
What's good for oil is good for all, you can't turn it around.
But if we could end apartheid and we saved Clayoquot Sound,
We can stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline.*

Expect to hear Bossin's song at upcoming anti-KM rallies. The proposed pipeline expansion is a monstrosity and more and more Canadians are repeating Varley's words to those responsible: *We don't believe you anymore!* 

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of **Our Clinic**. brucemason@shaw.ca

We Don't Want Your Pipeline
www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bKxATTtVaM
We Don't Believe You Anymore
www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9ixUlfFVmY

...*Whistleblowers* from pg. 5

its report into meetings along the pipeline and tanker route until November 1, 2016. The panel was the centerpiece of Justin Trudeau's election campaign promise to reform the National Energy Board.

"Thousands of people took time out of their day to voice their opposition to the only federal representatives who would listen," said Peter McCartney, Climate Campaigner for the Wilderness Committee, who attended all of those meetings. "To know that Cabinet didn't even consider their input is a slap in the face to all British Columbians."

Source: *Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs* ("UBCIC"), ubcic.bc.ca

Supporting organizations

The Wilderness Committee is Canada's people-powered, citizen-funded wilderness protection group. wildernesscommittee.org

Greenpeace: The organization's goal is to "ensure the ability of the Earth to nurture life in all its diversity" and focuses its campaigning on worldwide issues. greenpeace.org

350.org uses online campaigns, grassroots organizing, and mass public actions to oppose new coal, oil and gas projects and build 100% clean energy

solutions that work for all.

Dogwood is BC's largest nonpartisan citizen action network. dogwoodbc.ca

The Council of Canadians is Canada's leading social action organization, mobilizing a network of 60 chapters across the country. canadians.org

SumOfUs is a community of people from around the world committed to curbing the growing power of corporations. sumofus.org

BROKE (Burnaby Residents Opposed to Kinder Morgan Expansion) is a group of local residents whose mission includes preventing the expansion of the Kinder Morgan Pipeline and related infrastructure in Burnaby and supertanker traffic. brokepipeline-watch.ca

Coast Protectors: The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs are working towards the recognition, implementation and exercise of inherent Indigenous Title, Rights and Treaty Rights. www.coastprotectors.ca


The Pipe Up Network is made up of residents of Southwestern BC who have come together because of their concerns about the safety, environmental and financial implications of shipping tar sands along Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Pipeline. pipe-up.net

Get involved!

"Now is the time to stand beside Indigenous people in support of our timeless struggle to defend Mother Earth, whether our Indigenous Land Rights are being violated in BC, by Kinder Morgan's TMX pipeline, the Site C Dam, the Pacific Northwest LNG plant or in Standing Rock with the Dakota Access Pipeline. There is a battle being waged across the globe by Indigenous Peoples and their allies demanding a safe, healthy world for future generations. This is about water versus oil and life versus death, and ultimately, survival versus extinction." – *Grand Chief Stewart Phillip*

Sign the pledge to Stop Kinder Morgan

"With our voice, in the courts or the streets, on the water or the land. Whatever it takes, we will stop the Kinder Morgan Pipeline and tanker project."

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MEDIA



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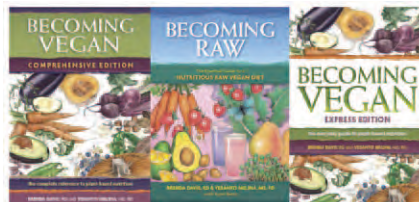
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Independent Media Marianela Ramos Capelo

MEDIA

Freedom of online expression a challenge for women

The International Women's Day in March brought to the forefront conversations that centre around the unique challenges women face. These challenges include full access to their human rights, from the right to equal pay (e.g. the pay gap or uncompensated care work) to the right to move freely and unbothered in public space (e.g. gendered street and workplace harassment) to the right of equal treatment under the law (e.g. missing murdered indigenous women cases).

Since our organization deals with digital rights, we want to look at how the right of free expression is yet to be fully realized for women online. In 2016, the Minister of Status of Women in Canada recognized online and technology-facilitated violence as a specific form of gender-based violence, meaning it is a form of violence that affects women and gender non-conforming individuals in a particular and disproportionate way.

From online threats of harm and sexual assaults, to public shaming, exposure of personal information and hostility in public platforms, these forms of online violence are an obstacle for women to fully exercise their right to express themselves in the

online platforms that have become a staple of our everyday lives.

Who is targeted? A Pew Research Centre survey found that women aged 18-24 suffer from particularly severe forms of online harassment, with 25% of the surveyed participants reporting having been the target of online sexual harassment (in contrast to 13% of men) and 26% reported having been stalked online (as opposed to 7% of men). Overall, while young men are slightly more likely to suffer from harassment online (likely due to the gender gap on Internet usage), the types of abuse that women experience are reported to be more severe in impact.

The cost of this form of gendered online violence is huge. A 2015 report on the matter by the United Nation's Broadband Commission alerted us of the "chilling effect on free speech and advocacy" that stems from gender based violence online. The high levels of impunity for these forms of online violence don't help either. With online platforms increasingly being a site of public discourse in democratic societies, these obstacles silence, and make invisible, a key sector of society in the public sphere through either backlash or by incentivising

self-censoring to avoid abuse.

Online gendered violence, the UN report says, also fosters the gendered digital divide, warning that "complacency and failure to address and solve [violence against women online] could significantly impede the uptake of broadband by women everywhere." This also means unequal access to digital economies, participation in democratic processes, creation and consumption of media and other benefits that the Internet and information and technology communications bring.

The Internet reflects and amplifies the inequalities found offline and while the government's recognition of online gendered violence as an issue is an important step, it is clearly not enough. We need a cohesive and collective strategy to tackle this problem.

Know of any people or organizations addressing this issue? Let us know @OpenMediaOrg on Twitter or by emailing us at contact@openmedia.org

Marianela Ramos Capelo is a graphic designer and part of the communications team at OpenMedia, a community-based organization that works to keep the Internet open, affordable and surveillance-free. openmedia.org



Pipeline dispute shows shift is needed

On March 31, an underwater pipeline carrying oil to a refinery in Balikpapan, Indonesia, broke, spreading crude over 20,000 hectares of Balikpapan Bay. Some of it ignited, killing five fishermen. Area residents experienced health problems including nausea, vomiting and respiratory difficulties. Marine life and mangroves were also devastated.

In mid-January, an Iranian tanker carrying more than 111,300 tonnes of natural gas condensate hit a cargo ship, caught fire and sank in the East China Sea in one of China's richest fishing grounds. The accident killed all 32 of the tanker's crew and left an oil slick bigger than Paris – more than 100 square kilometres. Researchers say the spill and fire killed phytoplankton, marine mammals, fish and birds and will have long-lasting consequences.

Meanwhile, in North America and elsewhere, pipeline accidents continue to spew gas and oil into the environment, polluting air, water and land and affecting wildlife and habitat, as well as human communities. Tanker, pipeline and drilling rig accidents have devastated ecosystems and endangered human health and lives worldwide, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Alaska coast to the Niger Delta.

In the midst of it all, we have Canadian provincial and

federal governments bizarrely claiming that expanding oilsands production and pipelines is not only in keeping with our national and international climate commitments, but is actually necessary to them! The government of my home province, BC, while standing firm in protecting the province's interests against Kinder Morgan's obsolete Trans Mountain pipeline project, thinks increasing fracking for the energy-intensive, methane-spewing liquefied natural gas industry is the way to go.

Our waters, air and climate are too important to risk for short-term gain.


If short-term economic gain, a relatively small number of jobs and the priorities of shareholders in mostly foreign-owned companies are more important to the national interest than ensuring that people and ecosystems here and around the world remain healthy and alive, something is wrong.

Most discussions...about Texas-based Kinder Morgan's pipeline project don't even mention climate change. It's mostly just shouting about the need to get Canadian resources to foreign markets and threaten-

ing economic and trade sanctions for not bowing to the wishes of industry and its supporters...

One can sympathize with the federal government, which is already facing some provincial opposition to its climate policies and is likely to face more after a number of upcoming provincial elections. The Alberta government is also in a difficult position, struggling to hold power in a province where many people are blind to the realities of global warming and have an overblown sense of the oil industry's relative, and declining, importance.

For the federal government to argue that the pipeline is necessary to keep Alberta on-board with its climate plan is short-sighted when the party leading in Alberta polls opposes key elements of the plan.

Our...waters, air and climate are too important to risk for short-term gain. We must stand together against the Kinder Morgan pipeline project and all fossil fuel expansion. We have better ways to create jobs and economic opportunity. 

Excerpted from the original article. **David Suzuki** is a scientist, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from foundation Senior Editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

Canada stuck to death on the Tar Baby

by Bruce Mason

ATar Baby. That's what we have on our hands, or on any other appendage or orifice that it makes contact with. Obviously, the proposed expansion of Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Pipeline, and the ongoing national kerfuffle, is a 'sticky situation.' A Tar Baby is defined as a difficult problem, only aggravated and exacerbated by any additional involvement and myriad attempts to solve it.

There are some 300 versions of the Tar Baby story, across virtually all cultures. The gist of them all: a villain constructs a doll of tar and turpentine, or any available adhesives, to entrap the curious unwary, who become more entangled the more they touch it. The Canadian version is crafted from heavy, tar-like bitumen and toxic, highly flammable condensate.

Poor Justin champions and embraces the Kinder Morgan Tar Baby and is now firmly attached and contorted, beyond hope of redemption or release. Born with a sliver spoon in his mouth, the former drama teacher has perfected the art of speaking out of both sides of it, reading from a teleprompter script that more pipelines are just the thing to combat looming, man-made climate collapse. Using the same argument: buying endless rounds of booze cures alcoholism, third helpings are a sure-fire fix for obesity

and another carton of smokes is a clinically proven treatment for lung cancer. Stuck logic.

Notley clings to the Tar Baby from the dark corner into which Alberta has painstakingly painted itself. Norway has banked a trillion public dollars from its oil sales. At the same time, Albertans have squandered their Heritage



Trudeau's hastily and inadequately revamped National Energy Board was instructed "to give cabinet a legally sound basis to say "Yes" to Trans Mountain.

Fund fortune, running up a \$45 billion Tar Sands clean-up tab, abandoning thousands of orphaned wells, while bragging about the 'Alberta Advantage' – unlike the rest of Canada, they pay no provincial sales tax. Surprise, the Alberta ATM is desperately stuck near NSF.

An enduring phrase from the place just east of BC is "Let the Eastern bastards freeze in the dark." It was commonplace in another energy war, back in another Trudeau era. Now it's karma time. A reality check and a banquet of consequences.

The saying I picked up during my time in Alberta (lost years playing music from Medicine Hat to Fort Mac) is "Stick with me Baby and you'll be farting through silk." Notley and her ilk covet fine Chinese silk, exchanged with a lesser share of Texas petro-dollars, fashioned by corporate elites, nipped, tucked and dumbed down by a shameful corporate media. Too much gas to go around.

The flatulence is still audible across the Rockies, from well-heeled Albertans scooping up Super Natural BC property or taking selfies in downtown Vancouver and texting that this would make a nice place for other pipelines and a flotilla of Aframax tankers.

An "economic crisis." Or a "constitutional crisis." It all depends on the flavour or the week and your low-information vendor of choice. My grandmother would say, "Your failure to plan is not my crisis."

Nor is it in anybody's best interest, "national" or otherwise. And fewer folks are buying the "jobs, jobs, jobs" mantra. (Or is it Jawbs?). They come and go, boom to bust, providing as much long-term *continued next page ...*

comfort as a weak Chinook in a frigid foothills' winter. As sad and lonely as Ian Tyson's *Four Strong Winds*.

A few honest, competent journalists still ply the trade, including Michael De Sousa, who reported that Trudeau's hastily and inadequately revamped National Energy Board was instructed "to give cabinet a legally sound basis to say "Yes" to Trans Mountain." The order from on high was issued weeks before sham consultations with First Nations. Some Tar Baby and wary Indigenous people have seen the movie many times. Shiny beads, fire-water and smallpox infected blankets no longer do the land-swap, old bait and switch trick on our Aboriginal people, very much on the rise and in leadership in anti-Tar Baby roles.

In her refreshingly straight-forward essay, *Here's what you don't know about Kinder Morgan*, Green leader Elizabeth May has debunked the KM Tar Baby. The expanded pipeline wasn't thoroughly reviewed and actually produced a pile of "worthless assertions, untested as evidence." Much vaunted national interest" does not include

energy security, net employment benefits, environment, climate, GDP or anything other than getting the pipeline approved. The case for Kinder Morgan is a sleight-of-hand card trick.

"I am choking on the lies and hypocrisy of Kinder Morgan, the NEB and now the Trudeau Liberals. It's a miracle I can remain civil in my non-violent civil disobedience," she confessed.

Another of a few adults standing in the House of Commons, Burnaby MP Kennedy Stewart had a recent 'news flash' for his political colleagues: Kinder Morgan has not yet received final permission from the NEB; one-third of the route hasn't been approved, KM, the bastard child of disgraced Enron, wants to delay future route hearings; of the 157 required conditions, only half the boxes have been ticked and paperwork hasn't even been filed for 50, with others rejected outright; and KM has also not even filed paperwork for 600 outstanding permissions of the 1,187 permits required from the B.C. government. Once again, some

see the KM Tar Baby for what it is. Literally, a pig in a dilbit pipeline poke.

With his one free hand, Justin Trudeau is trying to pickpocket \$2+ billion in public funds to bail out this rapidly sinking ship of fossil fools. Put in perspective, a million seconds is 12 days, a billion seconds is 31 years. Millions are what oil execs are paid in bonuses. Billions are what Canadian taxpayers could pay for the proposed KM Tar Baby monstrosity.

We're stuck, burning fossil fuel, releasing murderous greenhouse gases while choking on the plastic we make from what's left over in this crude cycle. It belongs swirling at the bottom of a toilet. Let's finally flush the unhealthy Kinder Morgan Tar Baby and clean up our act.

A last word from Elizabeth May: "No one can force BC into saying 'Uncle;' we're too busy saying 'Mother Earth.'"

We can do better and more and more of us are already embarking on a clean energy path, globally. Getting unstuck is just a first, overdue step for Canada. ■

When pain shouts, pay attention!

by Johnny Frem Dixon

If you try to ignore pain, my friend, it only shouts louder. Other voices call you elsewhere, but be still. We feel helpless, but physicians don't. Training instills confidence that medication is the answer, but drugs only stop pain temporarily. Why kill it anyway? It only asks for awareness. It's a sensation just like hot, cold, wet or dry. Is it good or bad? It simply exists.

A roofer I know is friends with many drug users in the park where he hangs. He says his friends are dropping like flies and lists a half dozen people I've met. Faces I know, who as my friend says, are "All dead now. Wasn't always like this. But drugs aren't the same anymore. No borders to cross. It's all from labs: crystal meth and fentanyl are dirt cheap. No cocaine – just a mix of synthetics that produce similar effects. Fentanyl is the main ingredient in heroin on the streets these days, so it's easier to overdose. Everyone's switching over to hard drugs. The guys who used to sell pot, now sell hard stuff because they can't compete with the pot dispensaries; \$7 a gram in BC, half what you'd pay anywhere else. But street people don't have ID. Pot stores demand it. Dealers don't. And give credit 'til welfare day."

So how did we get to such a soaring use of opioids? "Fifteen to 19% of Canadian adults live with chronic non-cancer pain... [It] interferes with... daily living,

[reduces] quality of life and is the leading cause of health resource utilization... and disability among working-age adults."

In the 1990s, drug companies developed amazing drugs for pain relief, recognizing a potential gold mine. Drug companies and their organizations courted physicians and lobbied state governments for "the right to pain relief," advocating an increased use of opioids, stating they were highly effective and the risk of addiction extremely small. But the studies they cited were for short-term, not long-term, use. The opioid crisis is largely attributable to over-prescription. More details of this campaign can be found in a 10-page article in *Esquire* magazine entitled, *The Secretive Family Making Billions from the Opioid Crisis*.

Do you know that the company that makes oxy and reaps the billions of dollars in profits it generates is owned by one family? The Sackler family, owners of Purdue Pharma, even went so far as to offer a patient starter coupon for Oxy-Contin, giving patients a free, limited-time prescription for a seven to 30-day supply: "The first one's free."

I ask my sister, a family practitioner in Victoria, about opioid-prescribing today. "Sure, I prescribe pain-killers for post-operative pain. For childbirth, an IV injection of fentanyl. It wears off quickly and we don't use it near delivery-time. Occasionally, I prescribe opioids for

chronic pain – only for cancer patients – but otherwise, I don't. My patients know not to ask me." "Why not?" I ask. She laughs. "They just know they won't get them from me. There was a time though, maybe 10 or 15 years ago, when oxycodone was a common choice for post-op pain. We didn't understand how addictive it was. Doctors now realize it just doesn't work." "So what do you do?" I ask. "I refer them to a pain clinic," she says.

A friend of mine, Heather Keith, along with her husband, an MD, opened a pain clinic in the 80s, long before pain clinics became recognized as a crucial component of healing and recovery.

"A lot of pain is a dysponetic loop," she tells me. "When you have pain, your brain tells you to tense up. The tension causes more pain, which causes more tension. We have an emotional response to pain. We shrink away from it. With bio-feedback, we taught people to trick their brains into relaxing despite pain. We ran a six-week residential program. But follow-up is essential because relapse is frequent."

The medical establishment was reluctant to endorse their work. Payments were slow. Bureaucracy was skeptical. They persevered. So, now, physicians like my sister realize the value of pain clinics. They use several techniques to teach people to manage their pain: autogenic training, a form of self-hyp-

nosis via progressive muscle relaxation and then hooking up to a biofeedback machine; mindfulness-based stress reduction, which teaches you to sit with pain, notice it, acknowledge it, but how you react is in your control; and cognitive behavioural therapy. If we change how we think about something or how we act, we can feel better about it.

For people with opioid addiction, maintenance medications, such as methadone and suboxone, can ease or delay withdrawal symptoms, providing a better chance of recovery especially when paired with supportive and empowering psychological treatment.

Perhaps killing pain in the first place wasn't such a good idea. There is no magic bullet, not bio-feedback, not mindfulness, not opioids. We need to learn some serious distress tolerance skills and accept that pain will always exist. We each have a responsibility. That is, an ability to respond. Pain can shout loudly. But, ultimately, we each choose our response. Learn to listen closely to pain, my friend.

The Chronic Pain Self-Management Program is a free, six-week, patient education program offered across BC. See www.selfmanagementbc.ca/chronicpainprogram ■

Johnny Frem organized "Bolts of Fiction" for six years and instigated the Vancouver Story Slam. johnny4em@gmail.com

Events

For rates & placements email
editor@commonground.ca

MAY 12

Rally & March. Kinder Morgan Pipeline? Don't Bank On it! 1PM. TD Bank Tower. 700 W. Georgia. www.climateconvergence.ca 778-889-7664, climateconvergence604@gmail.com

MAY 12

Free Open House – Institute of Holistic Nutrition (Vancouver): Course/Career opportunities, exhibits, talks & more. 9AM-5PM, 604 West Broadway, Ste. 300. 604-558-4000. Lecture descriptions at www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com

MAY 12

Tibetan Wisdom Sword Workshop: A dynamic, deep-rooted, mindfulness training with a sword. @Stretch; 180 E. Pender St., 10AM-1PM. \$45 www.tibetanhealingmovement.com/events

MAY 13

Lu Jong Tibetan Yoga Workshop: Learn a clear system from Tibetan Medicine to release blockages. @Vancouver School of Healing Arts, 10AM-1PM. \$45 www.tibetanhealingmovement.com/events

MAY 17-21

Yoga For Youth Teacher Training: Help young people manage stress, anxiety, anger and loneliness as taught by Krishna Kaur. In Vancouver. Register at: www.yogawest.ca/yogaforyouth

MAY 18-20

Inaugural "Share Ayurveda Conference" & two gala dinners. Presented by the Canada Ayurveda Research & Education Foundation. Vancouver Public Library Conference Centre, 350 W. Georgia. Keynote speakers: Dr. Vasant Lad & Dr. Ramkumar Kutty. Register now at www.shareayurvedaconference.com

MAY 19

Discover Tools to Help You Thrive Spiritually: FREE WORKSHOP, 1-3PM – Registration 12:30PM. Mary Winspear Centre, 2243 Beacon Avenue, Sidney, BC. Presented by Eckankar The Path of Spiritual Freedom. www.eckankar-bc.ca 1-800-708-9060.

MAY 23

Adventure into Time and Beyond with Rifa Hodgson presents "Soul connection" Regression Workshop – 'Reunite with your Soulmates', 6:30-9:30PM, West Vancouver, www.lifebetweenlives.ca/Events 604-741-7944.

MAY 23

Experience a Shamanic Power Initiation at a FREE Open House in Vancouver: MAY 23, 7:30PM. & FREE ONLINE Open House MAY 22, 7PM. Hosted by Institute of Shamanic Medicine. RSVP by email to info@shamanicmedicine.ca www.shamanicmedicine.ca

MAY 25-27

Basic Holistic Foot Reflexology Certificate Weekend Course. \$375+ GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

MAY 27

5th Annual Veg Expo: Canada's premier sustainable, vegan & vegetarian expo. 10-5PM, Convention Centre West, 1055 Canada Place. Featured speaker: Kip Andersen. Over 200 vendors, kid's zone, speakers, vegan fitness. Tickets at vegexpo.ca

MAY 27

Dr. Shefali Ph.D (Conscious Parenting drshefali.com) gives a talk on "The Awakened Family" at the Stanley Theatre, Vancouver. 6:30-8:30 PM. Contact Banyen for more info: 604-737-8858.

JUN 7

Yarrow Willard gives a free talk on "Plant Communication." (yarrowwillard.com) 6:30-8PM, at Banyen Books. 3608 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver. banyen.com, 604-737-8858.

JUN 10

VANCOUVER: Dreamhealer Integrative Healing Workshop with Dr. Adam McLeod. Two unique group healing sessions. Learn how to integrate powerful healing tools into your life. Seating limited. IN TORONTO: June 3. (No workshops in 2019) Register online at www.dreamhealer.com

JUN 15-17

Basic Holistic Ear Reflexology Certificate Weekend Course. \$375+ GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JUN 23

"Liberate Your Lineage: Healing the Generations Ahead & Behind" – A psychotherapeutic & shamanic approach to family freedom. One-day workshop 11-5PM, Vancouver. For Info: liberateyourlineage@gmail.com

JUL 7-8

Come join us for the 1st Annual Fraser Valley Enlightenment Expo – Mind Body Spirit – at Chilliwack Heritage Park. For more information, email enlightenmentexpo@gmail.com Visit www.enlightenment.com or call 604-783-1606. (See display ad pg 10.)

JUL 8-14

Trager® Somatic Body Therapy Training: Learn to bring comfort to people's lives while being gentle on yourself. July 8-14, 2018, Vancouver. info@chrisbruels.ca 250-897-6454, www.facebook.com/events/180935715855060/

AUG 25-26

Become a Certified Life Coach or Executive Coach: Century Plaza Hotel & Spa, Vancouver. This 2-day intensive will teach you everything you need to know to succeed. Only Certified Coaches Federation graduates earn the esteemed Certified Life Coach Practitioner designations. Register at 866-455-2155 or 403-389-1190 or www.certifiedcoachesfederation.com

ONGOING

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I have enjoyed your fine magazine and do wish you continued success. Your publication is particularly important given the vanishing traditional; printed media. All the best.

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To Common Ground staff with Thanks for all the years of excellent articles.

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Here's my small contribution toward the great work & enlightened journalism of your independent publication.

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I am really impressed and grateful for the interesting articles and in-depth thoughtful analysis of issues.

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Thank you, Joseph Roberts and all Common Ground staff, for your work, information that keeps your readers "on their toes".

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